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Agricultural Situation

JUNE 1968

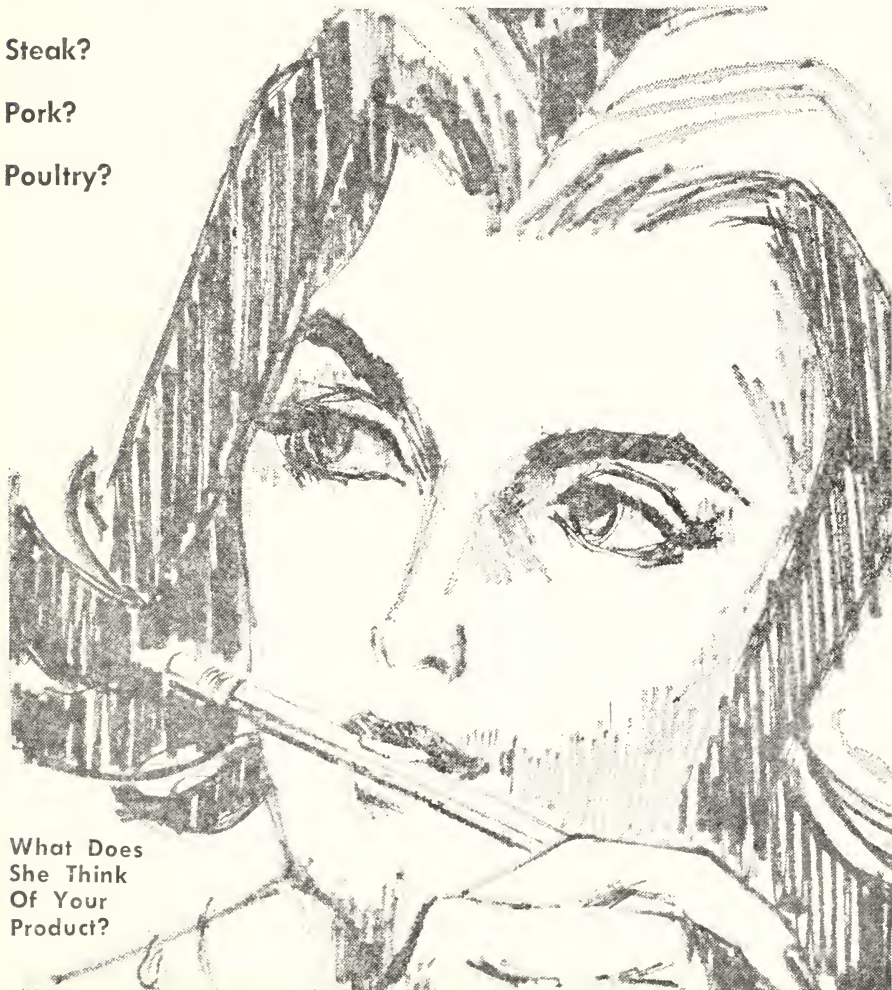
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Statistical Reporting Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Steak?

Pork?

Poultry?



What Does
She Think
Of Your
Product?

THE HOUSEWIFE JUDGES YOUR PRODUCT

Beef wins but chicken is not far behind in homemakers' opinions. Ground beef, steak, and oven roast are the beef cuts 776 homemakers said they use most, and in that order. These opinions are from preliminary findings of a survey conducted jointly by the Statistical Reporting Service and the National Live Stock and Meat Board.

Almost all homemakers said they had offered beef at a meal in the preceding 12 months. And about the same percentage said they had served chicken during the year.

Somewhat fewer homemakers reported that they put bacon and fresh pork on the table. But more than half said they fed their families bacon two or more times a week. Pork chops were the most popular form of fresh pork with these homemakers, and ham took the honors in the smoked or cured pork category.

Roughly 25 percent said they cooked lamb during the year, but half of them said they offered it less than once a month.

WHAT HOMEMAKERS DON'T LIKE

Packaging—Homemakers said pre-packaging made it difficult for them to judge proportions of fat and bone and size of cuts.

Preparation—Handling methods, lack of freshness and excessive waste, drew fewer complaints than packaging.

Prices—One out of five suggested that high prices held down their meat purchases. But the same proportion indicated they had no complaints.

About one-third agreed that their meat buying was most often determined by specials, but two in 10 claimed they paid no attention to price specials.

Almost nine out of 10 said they sometimes froze meat at home. But close to eight out of 10 flatly rejected the idea of buying meat already frozen, mainly because they couldn't gage how long ago it had been frozen at the store, and objected to buying meat "sight unseen."

GRADING AND INSPECTION

When asked the difference between grading and inspection of meats, many

homemakers gave confused answers. They assumed that grading (rating meat for quality as USDA Prime, Choice, etc.) included inspection, and that inspection (checking the meat for freshness, wholesomeness, etc.), in turn, included grading.

Some also thought that all meats were graded. In fact, about 63.7 percent of the commercial slaughter of beef in 1967 was graded.

HIGHLIGHTS OF HOW THE HOMEMAKERS SLICED IT BY SPECIFIC CUTS AND TYPES OF MEAT

Steak. Most interviewees regarded steak as a prestige meat, suitable for warm weather meals, and likely to please most tastes. But it was also considered expensive and difficult for some people to prepare.

Roast beef. Oven roast rated high for special guests and people whose tastes are not known, but pot roast fell down in both categories. Oven roast was said to be expensive, however. And both roasts were named poor choices for warm weather meals.

Stew beef. This meat had virtually no prestige value for the homemakers surveyed and was chosen for a particular use less often than other forms of beef. Though many thought it was inexpensive, they seemed less familiar with stew beef than with other cuts.

Chicken. Rated second only to beef, chicken was generally labeled as inexpensive yet suitable for special guests and guests with unknown food preferences. The homemakers felt chicken was especially appropriate for warm weather meals, but that, uncooked, it had poor keeping qualities.

Pork. Pork chops were mentioned as easy to prepare by one in five. Ham and pork both were declared to be tasty. Ham was also considered easy to keep, good to eat cold, and ideal for warm weather meals as well as company fare. However, neither meat was seen as inexpensive, versatile or generally healthful.

Statistical Reporting Service

Trends in Meat Buying Have Changed

Today's supermarket is stocked with a wider variety of farm products than ever before. But about the busiest part of the store—and getting busier—is the meat counter.

And small wonder. Today's affluent consumers have been upping their meat buying—especially beef and poultry—in recent years. They've been buying more beef because it has always been a prestige meat and they are better able to afford it now.

Poultry has become more popular because it is cheaper and more available than ever before.

Our level of meat consumption has gone up since 1950. Red meat consumption per person last year was 16 percent above 1950, and poultry consumption was up almost 90 percent.

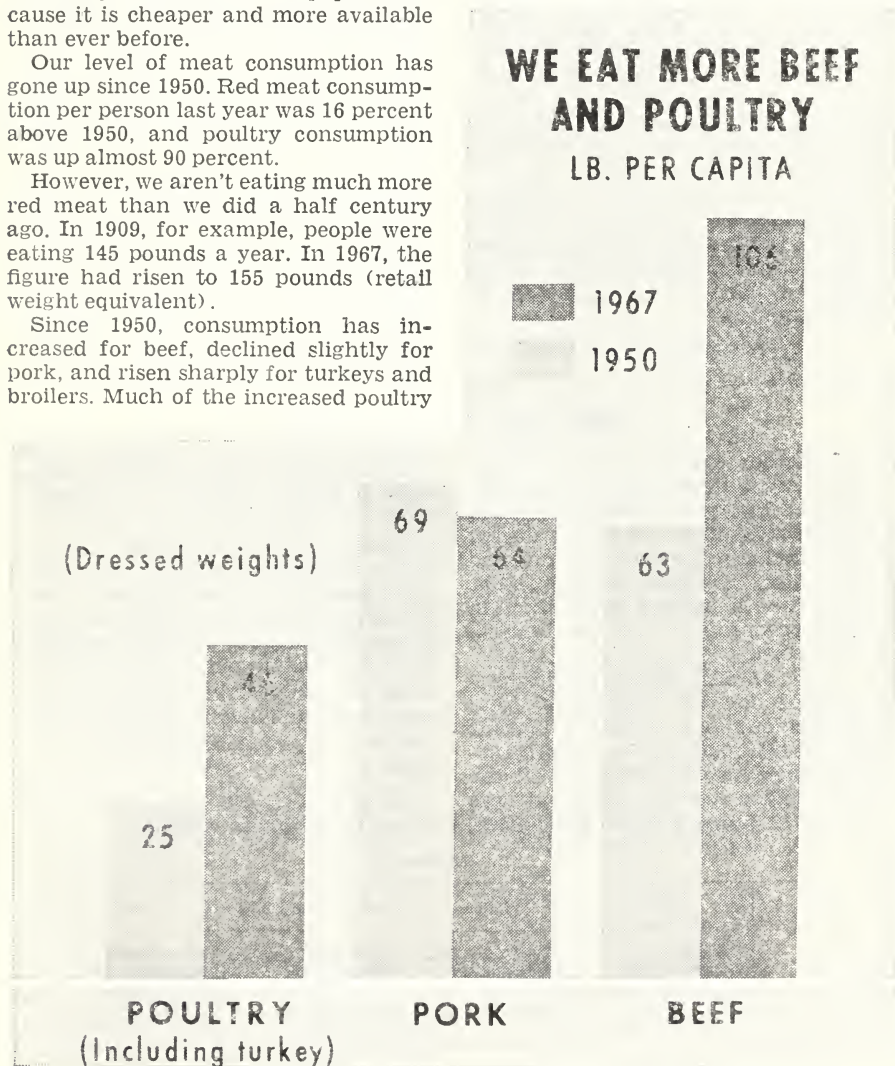
However, we aren't eating much more red meat than we did a half century ago. In 1909, for example, people were eating 145 pounds a year. In 1967, the figure had risen to 155 pounds (retail weight equivalent).

Since 1950, consumption has increased for beef, declined slightly for pork, and risen sharply for turkeys and broilers. Much of the increased poultry

consumption is associated with technological advances in production, permitting the raising of more birds at lower costs. Many of the savings have been passed on to the consumer. Retail prices for fryers, for example, have gone down 30 percent since 1950.

The increase in beef consumption is associated with a rapid postwar rise in production of grain-fed beef, and an increase in demand for beef.

The small decline in the amount of



pork consumed per person is attributed to changing tastes as much as anything else—toward lighter breakfasts, for example, and leaner meats.

After reaching a near-peak consumption rate of 6½ pounds per person during World War II, lamb and mutton consumption dropped to about 3½ pounds in 1950 and has not varied greatly since then.

Consumption of all livestock products, including dairy products and eggs, is seasonally lowest during the first or second quarters of the year.

Consumption usually rises some in the third quarter and reaches a peak in the last quarter which includes the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Red meat consumption tends to be seasonally low in the second and third quarters. Pork in particular follows a strong seasonal pattern, largely because of summer declines in output.

The poultry consumption pattern is strong—smallest amounts are consumed in the first quarter and progressively more each quarter. The biggest amount—influenced by turkey—is in the final quarter.

Economic Research Service

MEAT IMPORTS

Meat prices are usually higher in the United States than in most other countries. Result: We export relatively little meat, eat most of it here ourselves, and with our strong demand, attract some from other countries.

The United States is, however, a leading exporter of other livestock products such as tallow, greases and lard, hides and skins, and variety meats. The export value of each of these classes of commodities is much larger than the value of our red meat exports.

In 1967 the United States sent \$48 million worth of red meat—beef, veal, pork, and lamb—overseas. At the same time, our export value of other livestock goods was \$176 million in tallow, greases and lard; \$127 million in hides and skins; and \$57 million in variety meats.

U.S. imports of meat and meat products in 1967 were valued at \$834 million, down from \$906 million in 1966.

The carcass weight equivalent of total imports of red meat to the United States came to 1,841 million pounds in 1967. This was 7 percent above 1966 but 10 percent below the 1963 record.

RED MEAT OUTPUT CLIMBS

Livestock producers kept American meat counters abundantly stocked last year. Total production of red meat in the 48 States during 1967, including commercial and farm slaughter, was 34.2 billion pounds. That was 5 percent more than in 1966, according to the Crop Reporting Board.

Beef, at 20.2 billion pounds, accounted for 59 percent of total production, and totaled 2 percent above 1966 output. Veal, representing 2 percent of production, hit the 792 million pound mark but was down 13 percent from 1966. Pork,

representing 37 percent of total red meat production, was up 11 percent with a total of 12.6 billion pounds.

The average live weight of all cattle slaughtered during 1967 was 1,018 pounds, 9 pounds heavier than a year earlier. Average live weight of calves slaughtered was 234 pounds, a decrease of 6 pounds; hogs averaged 241 pounds, 1 pound lighter; and sheep and lambs averaged 101 pounds, 1 pound lighter than in 1966.

Leading States in numbers slaughtered are as follows:

[In thousands]

1967 rank	Cattle	Calves	Sheep and lambs	Hogs
1	Iowa, 4,229	New York, 836	California, 1,966	Iowa, 19,493
2	Nebraska, 3,552	Wisconsin, 620	Texas, 1,625	Minnesota, 5,875
3	California, 3,050	Pennsylvania, 548	Colorado, 1,584	Illinois, 4,825
4	Texas, 2,573	Texas, 419	Utah, 914	Ohio, 4,757
5	Minnesota, 1,900	New Jersey, 357	New Jersey, 913	Pennsylvania, 4,015

CO-OPS TOP \$15 BILLION IN BUSINESS

If those intrepid farmers who started their cooperatives from scratch in the first half of the century could only see how far these farmer-owned businesses have come.

Today about five out of every six farmers belong to marketing, purchasing or service cooperatives.

And with good reason. Farmers use their co-ops to bargain for better prices and to buy and sell more effectively.

For the year ended June 30, 1966, net dollar business volume of farmer cooperatives hit a record \$15.7 billion, 7 percent more than the previous year, and 61 percent over 10 years ago.

California, Minnesota, and Iowa ranked first, second, and third among the States in volume of cooperative business.

Net value of all farm products marketed amounted to \$12.3 billion, with dairy, grain, and livestock leading in order of value.

Urge To Merge. Like the farmer and the businessman, cooperatives have turned to reorganization, consolidation, acquisition and merger to increase sales and efficiency. As a result the total number of cooperatives, 8,382, recorded in 1967 was 2 percent less than the previous year and 30 percent below the high point of 12,000 associations back in 1930.

Memberships were down, too, to 6.8 million—about 11 percent below a decade ago. This decline goes along with the continued decrease in number of farms and farmers. It does not indicate loss of interest in cooperatives. In fact, the average number of memberships per cooperative is going up. The figure was 818 in June 1966 compared with 781 a decade previously.

Minnesota leads all States in number of memberships and in number of associations. California continues in first place in net value of farm products marketed.

About 63 percent of all cooperatives primarily market farm products, 35 percent primarily handle farm supplies, and 2 percent perform services related to marketing or purchasing activities.

Farmer Cooperative Service

<i>Co-op series</i>	<i>Net business (except between cooperatives) \$1,000</i>
Products marketed:	
Beans and peas (dry edible) -----	29, 232
Cotton and cotton products -----	822, 887
Dairy products-----	3, 830, 172
Fruits and vegetables---	1, 538, 947
Grain, soybeans, soybean meal and oil-----	2, 679, 098
Livestock and livestock products -----	1, 685, 447
Nuts -----	194, 516
Poultry products-----	431, 470
Rice -----	238, 131
Sugar products-----	509, 278
Tobacco -----	262, 297
Wool and mohair-----	25, 792
Miscellaneous -----	65, 875
<hr/>	
Total farm products ¹ -----	12, 313, 142

Supplies purchased:			
Building materials.....	141,518		
Containers	32,704		
Farm machinery and equipment	81,033		
Feed	1,053,234		
Fertilizer	561,191		
Meats and groceries....	57,953		
Petroleum products.....	702,755		
Seed	119,127		
Sprays and dusts (farm chemicals)	90,814		
Other supplies.....	256,914		

Total farm supplies ¹ 3,097,293

Receipts for services (marketing and purchasing not included):

Trucking, cotton ginning, storage, grinding, locker plants, miscellaneous	328,156
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Total business ¹ 15,738,591

¹Adjusted for duplication.



Based on Information Available July 1, 1968

FARMERS TO TAKE HOME MORE

Latest reappraisal of 1968 farm income shows a projected realized net income about 5 percent more than the 1967 estimate of \$14.5 billion. Realized net income per farm would be up sharply, too, possibly close to \$5,049, the 1966 record. In addition, gains from both farm and nonfarm sources likely will increase per capita personal income for farm people to a record level.

CONSUMERS EAT LESS

We may be eating slightly less per person this year, according to the Economic Research Service, after eating 2 percent more in 1967. The actual figure will still probably be above the 1957-59 average, however. Most of the expected decline is due to lower use of fruits and animal products. Consumption of livestock products went up sharply in the early 1950's and has fluctuated more than crop products over the years since.

MILK SUPPORT UPS PRICES

Farm milk prices this year may average 5 percent over 1967, thanks to higher support levels. January-April production was 2.6 percent below a year earlier on a daily basis, and total 1968 output is expected to be lower than last year.

LIVELY LIVESTOCK RECEIPTS

Market receipts for livestock and products in the first quarter of 1968 hit \$6.1 billion, up 4 percent over a year earlier. During recent months, the demand for red meat has been particularly strong. Producer prices during January-March averaged nearly 1½ percent higher than those of a year earlier despite larger marketings. For the year as a whole, little change in total livestock output is expected.

With continued strong demand expansion likely, livestock product prices in 1968 are expected to average slightly above a year earlier.

RECORD GNP ADVANCE

The gross national product (GNP) scored a record advance to \$826.7 billion in the first quarter of 1968. A record level of consumer spending plus increased fixed business investment were mainly responsible. Additional consumer spending and continued employment gains are expected to advance GNP even further though less rapidly in coming months.

MARKET BASKET COSTS MORE

Cost at retail of the USDA's market basket of farm foods was about 2 percent higher in the first quarter from both the preceding quarter and a year earlier. Prices for most items rose. Prices farmers received went up, too, averaging 4 percent higher than in the fall. The marketing spread between retail cost and farm value averaged about the same as before.

FRUIT PRICES STRONG; SUPPLIES LOW

Orange output for 1967-68 is one-third off last year's large crop; grapefruit production is down nearly a fourth and lemons down 7 percent. Prices are up, however, and will likely stay that way until autumn. Most processed noncitrus fruits are in tight supply and wholesale prices are expected to continue high through midyear. Southern peach production expectations are up sharply from last year and a fourth above average. The Nation's 1968 strawberry crop looks to be slightly below last year and also lower than average.

CORN STOCKS HIGH

Stocks of corn on April 1 were estimated at nearly 3.2 billion bushels, 17 percent more than last year. Government owned stocks have declined in recent years, while privately owned stocks have increased—reaching a record high of 2.4 billion bushels on April 1. Domestic use during October-December was only about 3 percent above a year earlier while exports were about a fourth larger. The carry-over of corn next October 1 is expected to be around 1.1 to 1.2 billion bushels compared with 823 million last year.

MILK PRODUCTS. If all of the 10.6 billion pounds of milk used for frozen dairy products last year were combined into one gigantic cone . . .

It still wouldn't match the cheese that could be made from the 12.7 billion pounds of milk used in American cheese.

And that would be far smaller than the block of butter that could be made from the 26.4 billion pounds of milk used in butter production in 1967.

But the glass of milk containing the 54.3 billion pounds of milk used in fluid milk products last year would dwarf all three.

PACKAGES, PACKAGES. By this July, every food package on grocery shelves must have a label meeting the requirements of the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act of 1966. (There are a few exceptions. Labels on meats, poultry, tobacco, alcoholic beverages and some other products are already regulated by law.)

Here are some of the provisions:

The net contents of the package will be listed on the principal display panel. They must be shown:

—In terms of total ounces (with a separate statement showing pounds and ounces).

—In bold face in a color that is in contrast to the rest of the label.

—In a type size that is easy to read. There is a minimum size type for all packages in the same size range.

—In the bottom third of the display panel.

—Parallel to the bottom of the container.

The name of the product will also go on the

front panel, along with the product's form (whole, sliced, and so forth) unless it can be seen in the package or is illustrated on the label.

Ingredients must be listed by common names and in order of their importance. If a product's ingredients are standard-

FARM FOOD NOTES

ized, optional ingredients must be listed. And if the proportion of ingredients is important for comparing value, proportions must also be stated.

The manufacturer does not have to list the number of servings in a package, but if he does, he must give the size of the servings stated in some common measure such as ounces or cups or tablespoons.

TASTES IN FOOD. "Where did the food money go?" is a question asked by many housewives, and by many USDA researchers as well.

They find that housewives' choices among the major food groups have not changed much in a decade.

The typical housewife in 1965 used \$27.82 worth of groceries in a week. This was \$3.39 more than her counterpart in 1955 used.

The 14-percent increase in spending over the 10-year period was matched by a similar increase in food prices and more than matched by increased consumer income.

There were few differences in the share of food money allotted to each major food group.

For example, 38 cents of the housewife's food dollar went for meat, poultry, fish, and eggs in 1965. Her counterpart in 1955 allocated 37 cents for these foods.

There was no change in the percentage of the food dollar spent for fruits and vegetables, beverages, fats and oils, and sugars and sweets. But the share spent for dairy products dropped from 16 percent to 13 percent.

TRY RICE. When in Rome, call it risotto. In Madrid, try paella. In Cairo, make it pilaf. But anywhere in the United States, it's rice.

The average American is now eating 7.3 pounds of rice a year—just as he did back in 1909. In the years between, his appetite fell off for a while, and in 1956 he was eating only 5.6 pounds.

The lagging American appetite for rice began to pick up at the same time "convenient" forms of rice began appearing on grocers' shelves.

BLOOMING BUSINESS. A self-service customer in a florist shop is like the proverbial bull in a china shop.

Delicate blooms are frequently damaged by customers' heavy hands. And shoppers can't make appropriate selections without personal service and professional counsel.

For these reasons, nearly four out of five florists consider self-service ineffective.

Furthermore, few florists have enough customer traffic to warrant a self-service arrangement. Most flower sales are handled by telephone and the buyer doesn't set foot inside the store.

SRS Trains the Fact Collectors So They Will Do It Right

"How many total acres of land do you own?"

That might not seem like a tough question to ask. But the answer to it, and the replies to others more specific and detailed, are so important to agriculture that the questioner must spend 3 days of intensive schooling in learning the right way to get reliable responses.

Each spring over 1,300 enumerators, or interviewers, in the 48 States attend special training schools conducted by their State's crop reporting service. The effort is all directed toward collecting useful data during the June Enumerative Survey of USDA's Statistical Reporting Service. Survey results will be used immediately in preparing State and national estimates of pig crop production and crop acreages.

The enumerators include men and some women, all part-time workers and all with an interest in agriculture and an aptitude for interviewing. Their work requires that they locate certain designated areas of land called segments, contact the operators, and get precise answers from a series of specially designed questions.

Their schooling is handled by agricultural statisticians who have previously undergone several days of close study at one of two regional training sessions directed annually by SRS.

Enumerators spend their instruction periods learning to identify sample segments from aerial photographs, practicing interview techniques, posting responses properly on questionnaires, and viewing training films about crop and livestock reporting work. For new enumerators the training includes practice in the field as well as in the classroom.

Schooling includes practice in how to get accurate answers about crop acreages and livestock numbers. For the survey the enumerators also ask about farm labor, wages, and population.

The sample of land segments the

enumerators will visit is selected by a random method from the total land area of the country. On the average each farmer interviewed represents approximately 100 similar farmers. This means each interview has a great value to the complete agricultural picture and must be carried out with precision.

Statistical Reporting Service

SMALL FARMS CASH IN ON COTTON PROGRAM

Last year, 37,629 cotton farmers planted their entire acreage allotments and still remained eligible for diversion payments.

Why? Because their allotments were small. This special feature of the 1967 cotton program was designed to help only the grower with an acreage allotment of 10 acres or less. It was not available to planters with large allotments.

Growers on small farms who signed up for the program were not required to divert any of their cotton allotment from production. At the same time, they were eligible for price support payments and a price support loan on the cotton they produced.

These farmers represented a total cotton allotment of 219,660 acres, an average of 5.84 acres per farm. Diversion payments made to these producers totaled \$4,320,071—an average of \$114.80 per farm, or \$19.67 per acre of allotment.

The same basic provisions are in the current program and the program for 1969.

Most Diversion Payments Small. Looking at the entire farm program picture—including cotton—most payments to participants are small. One out of every six farmers who signed up received less than \$100 in 1967.

Half of all farmers in all government programs got less than \$500, and 70 percent got less than \$1,000.

Payments under these programs are generally based on acreage or production or both, with the size of payment reflecting generally the amount of acreage.

*Agricultural Stabilization and
Conservation Service*

LAND PRICES ARE STILL RISING

The land boom in the United States has lifted average farmland values throughout the 1960's. And the report for the year ended March 1, 1968, shows the past year was no exception.

But the percentage of increase was less than in the previous year.

By March 1 of this year the market value of farm real estate had increased 6 percent from a year earlier. This compares with a prior increase of 7 percent.

The national index of value per acre on March 1 had risen to 170 (1957-59=100) compared to 160 the year before.

Regionally, advances during this period ranged from 4 percent in the Mountain States to 9 percent in the Delta States. In addition to the Delta, increases of 7 percent or more also occurred in the Northeast, Northern Plains, Appalachian, Southeast, and Southern Plains regions.

Among States, the largest advances in farm real estate values in the year ended March 1 totaled 11 percent in Mississippi and 10 percent in Oklahoma. Smallest State increases, 2 percent, occurred in New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada.

State	1967	1967	1968	State	1967	1967	1968
	Mar. 1	Nov. 1	Mar. 1		Mar. 1	Nov. 1	Mar. 1
1957-59=100				1957-59=100			
Maine.....	141	150	154	Virginia.....	159	162	167
New Hampshire...	164	176	179	West Virginia....	139	142	150
Vermont.....	174	185	190	North Carolina....	158	163	169
Massachusetts.....	160	168	170	Kentucky.....	165	166	175
Rhode Island.....	172	182	186	Tennessee.....	173	174	185
Connecticut.....	157	168	170	Appalachian....	162	165	173
New York.....	145	149	155	South Carolina....	166	173	181
New Jersey.....	154	164	169	Georgia.....	207	209	225
Pennsylvania.....	160	169	171	Florida.....	160	161	168
Delaware.....	182	189	192	Alabama.....	189	194	201
Maryland.....	187	194	201	Southeast.....	179	183	192
Northeast.....	159	167	170	Mississippi.....	182	197	202
Michigan.....	147	155	157	Arkansas.....	212	220	232
Wisconsin.....	138	143	146	Louisiana.....	195	199	208
Minnesota.....	137	145	147	Delta States....	196	205	214
Lake States.....	140	147	149	Montana.....	161	168	171
Ohio.....	144	152	153	Idaho.....	140	147	148
Indiana.....	156	159	165	Wyoming.....	156	163	164
Illinois.....	149	152	156	Colorado.....	152	156	158
Iowa.....	147	151	155	New Mexico.....	166	171	169
Missouri.....	172	178	186	Arizona.....	138	141	141
Corn Belt.....	152	156	160	Utah.....	139	140	142
North Dakota....	158	165	169	Nevada.....	146	148	149
South Dakota....	157	160	166	Mountain.....	150	155	156
Nebraska.....	157	162	169	Washington.....	139	146	150
Kansas.....	151	155	162	Oregon.....	143	148	150
Northern Plains..	155	160	166	California.....	171	181	180
Oklahoma.....	181	192	199	Pacific.....	163	172	172
Texas.....	172	180	184	48 States....	160	166	170
Southern Plains..	174	183	188				

How Much Income Goes for Food?

Last year each American spent about (a) 15 cents, (b) 18 cents, or (c) 20 cents of every dollar on food. Which is right?

Each figure is correct because there are many ways to measure how much of our income goes for food. It all depends on the starting point. Three of the most commonly used measures are share of consumer expenditures per person, share of total income per person and share of disposable income per person.

Consumer expenditures are our day-to-day living costs. In 1967 food amounted to 19.6 percent of these expenditures. In 1957 we spent more, 22.7 percent.

Total income is income before taxes. In 1967 food costs took 15.4 percent of this income. By comparison, the share in 1957 was 18.2 percent.

Disposable income is what we take home after taxes. In 1967 food accounted for 17.7 percent. In 1957 it accounted for 20.7 percent.

Good Shoppers Pick the Right Times to Buy

The bargain-hunting food shopper will want to buy fish in June, fresh fruits and vegetables in April and beef and veal in January.

Those are the months when retail prices are generally lowest according to indices of seasonal price variation compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In recent years, however, food prices have not varied quite as much from one season to another as they used to. The difference between the highest and the lowest retail price of all foods during the year declined from 1.6 percent in 1956 to 1.3 percent in 1966.

The reason? A leveling to some extent of the seasonal price peaks and valleys on chicken, dairy products, eggs, onions, tomatoes, apples, oranges, bananas, and grapefruit.

Shifts in production methods have helped smooth out seasonal ups-and-downs in prices of some products, like broilers.

But for a few foods—notably potatoes—there was a widening of the price gap between seasonal highs and lows.

And many others showed little change in price patterns.

Pork prices have varied widely from season to season in the past decade and they still do. But the retail price peak in recent years has tended to come later—about September rather than in July.

Carnations: They Aren't Peanuts

Growers in 23 major States plan to have 2 percent more carnation plants in production this year.

Trivia? Not unless \$40.1 million is a trivial sum. That's last year's wholesale value of the crop for the major States. It figures out to 7.3 cents per bloom.

A 5-percent increase in plants is in store for production of standard mums, while a 6-percent increase in pompon mums and an 8-percent increase in potted mums is expected.

Gladioli growers intend to plant about 3 percent less acreage in 1968.

Carnations. Growers in 23 major States sold 551 million carnation blooms from 54 million plants in 1967—4 percent better than in 1966.

Standard chrysanthemums. Standard chrysanthemum sales in 1967 came to 133 million blooms from 109 million plants in the 23 major States. This was slightly below 1966. Wholesale value came to \$24.4 million.

Pompon chrysanthemums. Sales of these beauties totaled 28.1 million bunches from 114.6 million plants in the 23 States last year. Wholesale value amounted to \$23.1 million, up 4 percent from 1966.

Gladioli. Growers last year sold 25.7 million dozen spikes from 12,667 acres compared with 28.6 million dozen spikes sold from 13,387 acres a year earlier. Value of sales was \$17.8 million.

Roses. Last year 361.7 million rose blooms were sold in the 23 major States, down slightly from 1966. Sales of this popular flower totaled \$42.2 million, 3 percent over 1966.

Potted chrysanthemums. A total of 12.9 million pots were sold in the 23 States last year, 17 percent more than in 1966. The wholesale value of sales was up to \$18.3 million from \$15.9 million a year earlier.

Statistical Reporting Service

A Maze of Ways To Seed the Maize

The Indians taught the Pilgrims how to plant a fishhead alongside each maize seed to increase crop yield.

But since then, U.S. farmers have improved their corn planting and growing methods on their own and the pace has quickened.

In fact, the farmer of even 30 years ago might have difficulty understanding some of the techniques now in common use.

Routine planting today frequently involves chopping and shredding stalks in addition to plowing, disking, and harrowing. Of course, much depends on the texture and moisture content of the soil, last year's crop leftovers, terrain, and wind and water erosion.

Ninety percent of the corn fields in the 48 adjoining States in 1965 were plowed, disked or harrowed before any seed was planted. The average number of times a field was disked and harrowed varied from 1.6 in Florida and Missouri to 2.6 in Louisiana, with an average of 1.9 for all 48 States.

Fifty-four percent of the corn was drilled, 28 percent was hill-dropped, and only 1 percent was check-row planted. The remaining 17 percent was miscellaneous or unspecified.

What are the differences in these methods so familiar to corn growers but perhaps strange to others? Here's a rundown:

Drilled Corn

Using a tractor-mounted or pulled drill or planter, the soil is furrowed, and seeds are dropped at evenly-spaced intervals one-by-one and covered in a single operation.

Hill-Dropped Corn

After spring or fall plowing, a specified number of kernels—preset on the planter implement—are dropped in hills at regular intervals.

Check-Row Planted Corn

When corn is check-rowed, hills in the row are uniform distances from

each other, making weed control easier by permitting cultivation in several directions. However, newer varieties of corn and weed control chemicals have downgraded check-row planting from 28 percent of all corn acreage in 1948 to only 1 percent in 1965.

Till-Planting

Till-plant operations were reported in 26 States, accounting for 1 percent of the acreage of corn planted. The till-planter employs a sweep, moving field debris like stalks and weeds into the middle of rows. It seeds and firms soil over the seed trench, allowing once-over seedbed preparation.

Plow and Plant

Corn is planted in freshly plowed ground with no other tillage operation. An average of 5 percent of all corn acreage in the 48 States was planted this way in 1965.

Planter With Attachments

After tilling the soil, a planter with cultivator and harrow attached performs the final soil preparation and plants the seed in one trip over the field. A small reported percentage of land thus prepared in 1965—notably in the Corn Belt—marks the first acceptance of this new planting method.

Disking and Planting

About 2 percent of corn acreage was planted after one disking in 1965. About 4 percent was planted after disking 2 or more times. Plowing was eliminated in both cases.

Ninety-seven percent of the corn acreage in the 48 States was cultivated in 1965, with an average of 2.1 times over the field.

About 23 percent of the acreage planted was chemically treated for weed control before the corn sprouted from the ground and about 32 percent was treated afterward.

*Statistical Reporting Service
Economic Research Service*



A Crop Near St. Louis Brings Pride to Two Counties, Tears to Everybody's Eyes

There's no real money in a small market crop, right?

"Horseradish!" says a farmer near East St. Louis, Ill. He ought to know. He lives in an area where 80 to 90 percent of all U.S. production of this eye-watering, mouth-burning vegetable comes from.

Horseradish yields on farms in the two leading counties of St. Clair and Madison, both in Illinois, range from 2,000 pounds to more than 9,000 pounds per acre.

Although this carrot-shaped root is also grown in Wisconsin, New Jersey, California, and Pennsylvania, St. Clair and Madison Counties consider themselves "The Horseradish Capital of the United States."

Actually, horseradish is not a radish at all, but a member of the mustard family. The hot, mouth-burning sensation comes from the lively pungency of its oil. It stimulates the stomach, exciting the digestive processes and promoting secretions.

Horseradish grows in almost any good soil, but does best in deep, rich, moist loam well supplied with organic matter. It does not grow well in the South, however, except in higher elevations.

Near East St. Louis, the root is

grown on both riverbottom and hill land. The unique eye-watering hotness of the Illinois-grown horseradish is attributed to certain of the clay silts prevalent in the two counties.

Because the plant is grown commercially from root crowns and root cuttings instead of seeds, crossbreeding is difficult.

After spring plowing and harrowing, cuttings are planted 2 feet apart in furrows 3 to 5 inches deep, with 30 inches between rows. Root cuttings are placed in the same direction in each row, tamped in, and covered with a cultivator.

In this way, 8,700 sets of horseradish root cuttings will plant an acre.

Horseradish harvest generally comes later than for beets, carrots, and other root crops. It usually occurs in October or early in November. Tops are removed 3 or 4 days before harvest. Roots are turned up with a heavy plow. Soil is knocked loose and horseradish roots are thrown into crates or wagons as each row is plowed.

Roots are packed in straw and placed immediately in cold storage. They are kept from freezing and kept out of the light. Light makes them turn green. The spicy herb can be marketed at any time.

Further information on horseradish is found in USDA Leaflet No. 547, "Commercial Growing of Horseradish," for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price 5 cents.

SAVE THIS HANDY CORN STORAGE GUIDE

How long can you store shelled corn safely? Using the latest computing methods, scientists of the Agricultural Research Service have come up with the following table which may prove handy.

Remember, however, moisture content and temperature are only two factors in the loss of quality of stored corn. Others include rodents and insect infestations and lack of proper ventilation.

Moisture content of corn (percent)	Number of days of safe ¹ storage at—								
	75° F.	70° F.	65° F.	60° F.	55° F.	50° F.	45° F.	40° F.	35° F.
15	116.0	155.0	207.0	259.0	337.0	466.0	725.0	906.0	1,140.0
20	12.1	16.1	21.5	27.0	35.0	48.0	75.0	94.0	118.0
25	4.3	5.8	7.8	9.6	12.5	17.0	27.0	34.0	42.0
30	2.6	3.5	4.6	5.8	7.5	10.0	16.0	20.0	25.0

¹ This does not mean that corn stored within the indicated days will suffer no loss in quality. But the loss in quality of corn held beyond these times will bring about a lowering of grade.

Your Cooperation: Time Tested, It Makes the Modern Crop and Livestock Report a Reality

There have been many improvements in crop reporting since it was first begun nationally in 1866. Communications are faster, speedier mathematical calculations are possible, and reports are much more accurate and comprehensive.

But the basic element in the system has remained the crop reporter himself. Without thousands of farmers willing to provide timely, first-hand information, statistical reports available to the public could not exist in their present economical form.

Although a crop report—the piece of paper—is basically a summary of farming conditions in bushels, acres, or dollars, crop reporting is actually the way farmers keep *themselves* informed about agriculture.

The Statistical Reporting Service is the middleman in the reporting process: Taking up the information, sorting and checking it, making an informed estimate, and quickly making it public. So the crop reporter who mails in one card about his own farm conditions soon gets back a report covering all 3 million U.S. farms.

Such national information is valuable because it is useful to farmers. A reporter recently identified one of the most basic uses of the information: "I like to keep up with the trend of the times, to see what crops are supposed to be the best ones to plant."

The man who spoke those words, W. A. Duncan of Nottaway County, Va., is particularly qualified to talk about farm facts. At age 65, he has long been a successful farmer. And, for the past quarter of a century, he has been a reliable crop reporter.

Mr. Duncan has always participated in the general crop survey, one which fits in well with his kind of farming. Like many others in Virginia's Southside, the Duncan farm is diversified. It includes a dairy herd, pasture land, and feed and food crops.

His dairy operation is a particular point of pride: 60 cows, with 30 of them producing now and a well above-average yield of 12,000 pounds per cow.

A modern bulk tank stores the milk for distribution every other day to local markets.

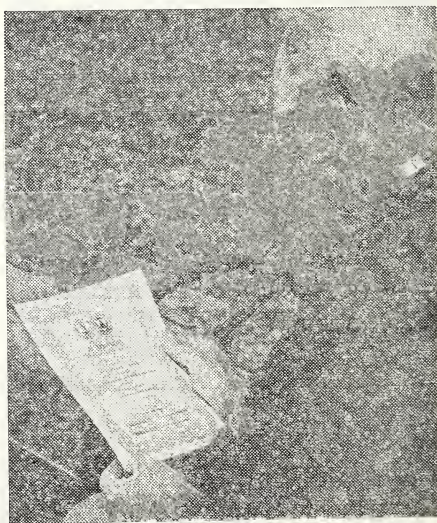
Duncan is unassuming about his success. After all, it's not rare for a man to manage a good dairy herd on a 200-acre farm and cooperate with the Virginia Crop Reporting Service for 25 uninterrupted years. But it's commendable.

In a sense, Duncan stands for other crop reporters who willingly pitch in their time for all of agriculture's benefit, seeking no special reward for their work.

To the Virginia Crop Reporting Service, though, Mr. Duncan and all the other cooperating reporters are quite special.

And in recognition of the good job reporters are doing, Virginia and several other States issue Crop Reporting Certificates, which recognize seniority of service.

The exact format and wording of the certificates are unique for each State.



W. A. Duncan, Virginia crop-reporter, checks his certificate for 25 years of continuous service.



SAM STAT SAYS

"Check My Data"

A brief roundup

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■ The 1968 winter wheat crop, estimated at 1.2 billion bushels, is 2 percent lower than 1967 production. But it is 23 percent more than the 1962-66 average. ■ Milk cows ate 22.8 millions tons of grain and other concentrates in 1967 compared with 22.7 million tons in 1966. The annual feeding rate was 3,374 pounds per cow. ■ Hay stocks at 25 million tons were up 15 percent on May 1 from a year earlier and 26 percent over the average. ■ Higher lint cotton prices in 1967 helped offset a production drop from 1966. But the combined value of lint and seed, at \$1,127 million in 1967, was still 10 percent below 1966. ■ Twenty million hundredweight of potatoes is the May 1 estimate of the late spring crop. This is 17 percent less than 1967 and 14 percent below average. ■ U.S. milk production, January through April 1968, came to slightly more than 39.5 billion pounds, off 1.8 percent from the same period of 1967. The estimated 10.5 billion pounds produced in April was the least for the month since 1952.

All Articles May Be

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Editor: Ben Blankenship

Lawn Mowers: A \$52 Trim

To hear him tell it, the suburban homeowner with a pretty lawn spends more money on it than he earns. There's the expense to prepare soil, plant seed or install sod. And then comes the fertilizer bill, and costs for fighting weeds, and mowing and trimming the lawn.

According to a survey by the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service, it averages about \$52 a year per lawn in that State. And this is probably comparable to costs in many other States.

Figured for just one lawn, that may not seem so much out of the pocket-book. But figured for the whole State, it spells a lot of business for supplier firms. The total cost of care and maintenance of home lawns in Pennsylvania came to \$117 million in a recent year.

Pennsylvania residents spent almost \$6 million on lawn fertilizer and lime alone. And another \$2.5 million went for weed, disease, and insect control.

The bill for seed, sod and plugs came to \$3.6 million.

Surveyors estimated that total "unpaid family

labor" on lawns represented \$66.5 million worth of manhours.

Those who did call on outside help, however, paid \$5.3 million for it.

In addition, Pennsylvanians own approximately \$285 million worth of mowers, rollers, spreaders, and other equipment.

They spent an estimated \$18.8 million in one year for new lawn equipment and another \$1.6 million for devices to water the grass. Keeping the equipment in good shape cost \$8.7 million—or \$3.86 per lawn.

The Agricultural Situation is sent free to crop, livestock, and price reporters in connection with their reporting work.

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